

MINUTES  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF YORK

Adjourned Meeting  
September 10, 2002

6:00 p.m.

Meeting Convened. An Adjourned Meeting of the York County Board of Supervisors was called to order at 6:01 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 2002, in the East Room, York Hall, by Chairman Donald E. Wiggins.

Attendance. The following members of the Board of Supervisors were present: Walter C. Zarembo, Sheila S. Noll, Donald E. Wiggins, and James S. Burgett.

Thomas G. Shepperd was absent.

Also in attendance were James O. McReynolds, County Administrator; and James E. Barnett, County Attorney.

**WORK SESSION**

PARK FACILITIES PLANNING SERVICES.

Mr. McReynolds stated the staff briefing would begin with discussion of an athletic field complex in the lower county and then proceed to discussion about the possible acquisition of the Cheatham Wilderness property. The last item to be discussed would be the development of New Quarter Park.

Mrs. Anne B. Smith, Director of Community Services, noted the staff had prepared a PowerPoint presentation which will lead to some decision points for the Board members to consider. She noted that Mr. Gould and Mr. Nash from the National Park Service were present to help with discussions on the Cheatham Wilderness property.

Athletic Field Complex:

Ms. Cheryl Sonderman, Parks and Recreation Manager, reviewed the athletic field needs for the County through the year 2005 and the proposed 125-acre site which is part of the Newport News Waterworks (NNWW). She stated the proposal has the full support of the NNWW staff who will recommend the project to Newport News City Council for approval. The proposed lease agreement will be for 50 years with an option to renew and it will require approval of detailed development plans by NNWW. Ms. Sonderman then reviewed the project site design and environmental issues to be addressed, as well as the need for a construction cost estimate and drawings. She stated the site is an excellent location for lower county residents, and staff hopes to review a draft lease within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Zarembo asked if this was the initiative discussed at an earlier time that would be a joint venture with Newport News.

Ms. Sonderman indicated it was, yet the Newport News involvement in this would be limited to the lease of the property.

Mr. Zaremba asked if Newport News would be approached to contribute any funding to the project.

Mrs. Smith stated she was not aware if Newport News had been approached for funding, but the project was highly unlikely to provide any benefit to Newport News residents. She noted that the provision of 125 acres for the project is a significant contribution to this inter-jurisdiction collaboration.

Chairman Wiggins noted that Newport News just completed several athletic fields, and it was probably not in a position at this time to consider any more fields.

Mr. McReynolds stated that at a previously considered location for the project there was to have been a section reserved for the City to build a community center, and the County would have put in the infrastructure. The current location isn't as attractive for the City's participation in developing the property to meet its needs.

Mrs. Noll stated she felt the proposal was a very good regional effort.

Discussion followed concerning City Council approval of the proposal and the estimated cost of the project being lower than the original proposal.

Mr. Burgett suggested the Board members individually talk personally with the members of City Council.

#### Cheatham Wilderness:

Ms. Sonderman stated the staff was very excited about the possible development of this property. It is approximately 700 acres that sits next to New Quarter Park between Cheatham Pond and Queens Creek. The property is owned by the National Park Service and managed by the Navy, and the General Management Plan contains an option for transferring the property to the County. She spoke of the exceptional development potential for regional recreation opportunities, and the fact that the location of the property could take advantage of the local tourist market. She explained that a detailed development plan would have to be developed to meet the requirements of the National Park Service and the Navy in order for the property transfer to take place.

Mr. Burgett asked if the County has the capability to produce such a plan.

Mrs. Smith stated that outside expertise would be needed for this development plan as well as the one for the athletic field complex.

Ms. Sonderman further stated that the staff feels the property has excellent development potential and will provide the opportunity for a regional draw and benefits, and she reviewed some of the possible recreational opportunities such as public boat ramps, canoeing, botanical gardens, camping, and an amphitheater. Because the property can be accessed by I-64 and Route 199, it is situated to take advantage of the tourist market.

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Discussion followed on the property's access to Route 199 and the required detailed development plan.

Chairman Wiggins asked how the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board felt about the project.

Mr. Douglas E. White, Chairman of the York County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, indicated the Advisory Board offered its complete endorsement. He stated the Advisory Board finds the proposal to be very appealing and attractive, and the members encourage the Board of Supervisors to move forward with haste.

#### New Quarter Park:

Ms. Sonderman noted that New Quarter was the County's largest park. It is a 545-acre site with a one-mile access road and many group amenities such as a 50-car parking lot, restroom building, volleyball court, softball field, campfire circle, 125-seat picnic shelter, 2 barbeque grills, and a floating pier on Queens Creek. She noted that 285 acres out of the 545 are developable. She stated the community has expressed interest in expanding the recreational opportunities at New Quarter Park, yet traffic concerns have been expressed by local residents and the National Park Service. The National Park Service will not approve an access directly from the parkway to the park because it is felt it will generate more traffic on the parkway. Ms. Sonderman then addressed a list of potential amenities that could be added to the park.

Mrs. Smith noted that the possibility of a botanical gardens and the mountain bike trail could be provided with no cost to the County. Groups have shown interest in providing plans for these amenities and have indicated they would carry the cost for construction. She stated all other possibilities were being suggested at the County's expense.

Chairman Wiggins spoke of discussions he had with Mayor Zeidler of Williamsburg and Chairman Kennedy of James City County about entering into negotiations for making a regional park out of New Quarter since it is located where it could serve their residents as well as York County's. He asked if staff had heard anything from either of the jurisdictions.

Mr. McReynolds indicated he had not heard from Williamsburg, but had talked briefly with the County Administrator from James City County. He stated James City County is open for discussion, but given that it just purchased a tract of land on Route 5, he was not sure there was truly a lot of interest in a regional park at this time.

Chairman Wiggins asked the other Board members how they felt about pursuing the possibility of a regional park with Williamsburg and James City County.

Mr. Zaremba indicated he has interacted with members of both the Williamsburg City Council and the James City County Board of Supervisors and has always gotten a positive response. He suggested this proposal might be something the Board should formally request the Regional Issues Committee to look into.

Chairman Wiggins asked if the Board members had any objections to asking Williamsburg and James City County formally whether or not they would be interested in entering into a regional park development with York County.

Mrs. Noll, Mr. Zaremba, and Mr. Burgett indicated they had no objections.

Mr. Burgett noted that New Quarter Park has been open to the public for three years now, and the Board still hasn't done everything planned for it. He stated he understands the opportunity for the 700-acre Cheatham Wilderness site, but everyone knows it is going to take a long time to get it acquired. He stated he feels it is good to proceed with acquiring the site, but as far as spending money, he feels the Board should put available funds into New Quarter Park at this time. Mr. Burgett stated he also liked the regional thoughts. He stated he would like to get one of the County's parks made into a first-class facility before the Board goes too far on others.

Mr. Zaremba spoke about a study that was done 25 years ago, stating the issues today are very much the same as they were then. He stated it is his hope that this Board finally gets some forward movement on the New Quarter Park project.

Chairman Wiggins also noted that the staff had brought a proposal to the Board several months ago for planning services needed for New Quarter Park, but took no action because the Board members couldn't decide if the County should pay for a study to develop a plan.

Mr. McReynolds stated one of the major issues that must be resolved with New Quarter Park is access. Cheatham Wilderness is almost a mirror image, but it doesn't have the same access problems. He stated if the Board wishes to develop some of the suggested amenities, a better opportunity may be to develop them on the Cheatham Wilderness, which would not mean the staff wouldn't continue to try and resolve the access problems of New Quarter Park. Mr. McReynolds stated the issues have been identified for years, but he is not sure staff will be able to come up with an alternative access to the park.

Mr. Burgett noted the County has current access to New Quarter Park and suggested the County might wish to improve on the current access so it can move forward with further development of the New Quarter Park property.

Discussion followed concerning the suggested projects for New Quarter Park and their appropriateness for the facility.

Ms. Sonderman reviewed some of the projects that could be developed at New Quarter Park to include:

Picnic Shelter	\$8,000
Playground Area	\$30,000
Walking/Hiking Trails	\$15,000 (per mile)
Off-leash Dog Area	\$22,000
Parking Lot	\$83,000
Restroom/Security Bldg.	\$100/sq. ft.

She also noted that there were other considerations such as the need for more staff for year-round operations and more security staff because of expanded operations. There will also be an increased level of maintenance because of added facilities.

Discussion followed concerning access to New Quarter Park from Lakeshead Drive.

Mr. Alec Gould, Superintendent of the Colonial National Historical Park, told the Board members if they continued with development of New Quarter Park, they should not consider improvements to Lakeshead Drive closer to toward the Parkway.

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Ms. Sonderman addressed the maximum development for New Quarter Park, stating staff would have to look at having a more detailed master plan for the property as well as the establishment of an alternative access to the park.

Mrs. Noll stated she could see some trails and picnic areas, but she stated she didn't want to develop New Quarter Park with much more because it is such a beautiful open area.

Mr. Zaremba stated most people go to the park, look around and walk about to the water, and get back in their cars and leave. Some people do some picnicking, but the security people say they hear time and again that there is nothing in the park for the visitors to do or use. He stated he did not feel that any of the proposals for further development of New Quarter Park are going to upset the natural balance of the park, and the Board needs to move slowly. Mr. Zaremba stated that in the meantime he feels the Board should move as quickly as possible on the Cheatham Wilderness issue because it could take 25 years to acquire the property.

Further discussion took place on acquisition of the Cheatham Wilderness property, the National Park Service support for the acquisition, and access to the property from Route 199.

Mrs. Smith then outlined the decision points the staff would like the Board to address and received the following consensus from the Board:

Regional Athletic Field Complex: Consensus for staff to get a draft lease agreement from the City of Newport News to look over and work out the terms.

Cheatham Wilderness: Consensus to pursue acquisition of the property, and direction to staff to meet with Navy and Park Service personnel to determine extent of what needs to be done to acquire the property.

New Quarter Park: Consensus to pursue limited development as suggested by staff with the exception of the Off-leash Dog Area.

Design Services: Consensus to pursue outside design services for park properties.

**CLOSED MEETING.** At 7:40 p.m. Mr. Zaremba moved that the Board convene in Closed Meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(a)(3) of the Code of Virginia pertaining to the acquisition of real property for a public purpose.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (4) Zaremba, Noll, Burgett, Wiggins  
Nay: (0)

Meeting Reconvened. At 7:55 p.m. the meeting was reconvened in open session by order of the Chair.

Mrs. Noll moved the adoption of proposed Resolution SR-1 that reads:

A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY COMPLIANCE WITH THE FREEDOM  
OF INFORMATION ACT REGARDING MEETING IN CLOSED  
SESSION

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WHEREAS, the York County Board of Supervisors has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the York County Board of Supervisors that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the York County Board of Supervisors this the 10th day of September, 2002, hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the York County Board of Supervisors.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (4) Noll, Burgett, Zaremba, Wiggins  
Nay: (0)

Meeting Adjourned. At 7:59 p.m. Mr. Zaremba moved that the meeting be adjourned sine die.

On roll call the vote was:

Yea: (4) Burgett, Zaremba, Noll, Wiggins  
Nay: (0)

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James O. McReynolds, Clerk  
York County Board of Supervisors

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Donald E. Wiggins, Chairman  
York County Board of Supervisors